

For Immediate Release:

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**Mayor Reed and Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force
to Hold Town Hall Meetings on Gang Activity in San José**
*Forums Allow Residents to Share Concerns about Recent Violence
and Ideas to Prevent Youth Crime and Involvement in Gangs*

SAN JOSE – Following an increase in homicides and gang violence, Mayor Chuck Reed and the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force will be holding town hall meetings throughout San José to address the issue of gang activity within the City. These community forums will offer residents an opportunity to share their concerns about gang activity and provide input on the City's efforts to prevent and suppress local gangs.

“While San José has one of the lowest crime rates of any major city in America, we need to act now to stem the increase in homicides and gang violence,” said Mayor Reed. “We need to provide alternatives that prevent kids from joining gangs, and we must provide options for young people to leave the gang life and become productive members of society.”

Since inception in 1991 under former Mayor Susan Hammer, the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force (MGPTF) has brought together law enforcement, city staff, and community stakeholders to collaborate and respond to the changing community needs. The nationally recognized task force program is being replicated by cities throughout California.

Last year, at Mayor Reed's recommendation, the City Council added \$1 million in one-time funding to the program to address urgent needs and extend services. In his March Budget Message, which was unanimously adopted by the City Council, the Mayor called for an additional \$1 million per year for the task force to carry out its critical work of preventing kids from joining gangs, intervening with those who have gotten into gangs, and suppressing gang violence.

“As a long time community member who has been with the Mayor’s Gang Prevention Taskforce since inception, I know the importance of community involvement when it comes to saving our kids. Every child lost to gangs is a child lost to the whole community and we will not let that happen,” said Cora Tomalinas, community activist and task force member.

The results of the town hall meetings will guide an update for the MGPTF’s new Strategic Work Plan and future funding decisions. The Strategic Work Plan will cover the period of 2008 to 2011 and will serve as the guiding principles for gang prevention, suppression, and intervention for San José.

“The town hall meetings offer an opportunity for residents throughout San José to speak out on gang activity in their neighborhoods,” said Councilmember Madison Nguyen, who serves on the MGPTF. “We are looking forward to hearing ideas for addressing gang issues.”

Each meeting will be attended by representatives from the Mayor’s Gang Prevention Task Force. Representatives from the Mayor’s Office, City Council, and relevant City departments will also be in attendance to answer questions. While the focus of each meeting will be on citywide issues, the discussion may vary to address the unique concerns raised by residents within a particular Police Division.

Date and Time	Location	Police District
Thursday, April 24, 2008 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.	Alum Rock Youth Center 137 N. White Road, San José, CA 95127	Foothill
Monday, April 28, 2008 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.	Franklin-McKinley School District Administrative Offices 645 Wool Creek Drive, San José, CA 95112	Western
Thursday, May 1, 2008 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.	Southside Community Center 5585 Cottle Road, San José, CA 95123	Southern
Monday, May 19, 2008 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.	San José City Hall: Committee Rooms 200 E. Santa Clara Street, San José, CA 95113	Central

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